Leica

THE PRECISION COMPANY

OPENING REMARKS

Wolfgang Müller *Klaus-Dieter Hofmann* *Burkard Kiesel*

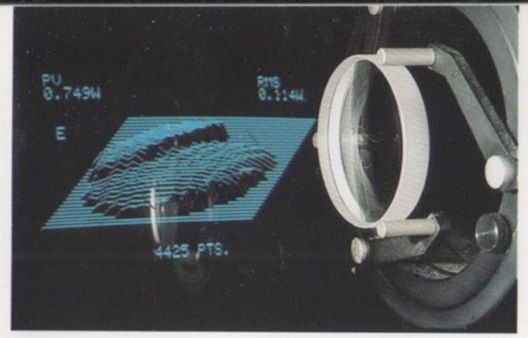
Unlike virtually any other European company of the trade, Leica Camera has courageously held its own in a difficult, embattled market – thanks to entrepreneurial farsightedness and a product philosophy in which the needs of the most demanding customers invariably serve as the focus point in development. Since October 1993, a team of three has been directing the destiny of this trademark of worldwide renown: Wolfgang Müller, Klaus-Dieter Hofmann, Burkard Kiesel – names which for quite some time have been inseparably connected with the success of Leica. A team whose decades of expertise decisively contributes enduring strength and represents the cornerstones of the company: Marketing / Sales, Finance / Controlling, Production / Development. This new management team takes advantage of their time-tested experience in order to cultivate products and services in accordance with the customer as closely as possible. Thus ensuring well into the future our place held within the trade, rich in tradition and the pioneering spirit, and for our Leica friends, always the best of the best!

We personally stand behind this with our names.

INNOVATION WITH TRADITION.

The legend continues. For more than three quarters of a century, Leica has been recording history in the hands of internationally renowned professional photographers and advanced amateurs. Then, as today, the Leica trademark endures as much more than just a product name: As the founder of 35 mm photography, we have always stood for "ne plus ultra" – the ultimate in excellence. Presently, and in looking forward, Leica remains loyal to its original concept of a small, high-precision camera with superb optics. Thus consistently keeping to its philosophy of "concentrating on essentials". Leica is a company rich in tradition within innovation and fully lives up to its claim of quality. The Leica Camera factory in Solms was founded with the objective of meeting the highest possible demands. Production, being the heart of the company, was purposely positioned between development and marketing so each cog smoothly engages into the next. Only carefully selected materials are used for production: special metal alloys and varying types of high-quality optical glass melted according to original Leica formulas. Electronic components are used wherever expedient, and only if they help pave the way to achieving optimum image results.

A highly qualified staff takes precision to the limits of technical feasibility – combining manual craftsmanship with the most up-to-date computer-aided production methods. An absolute must for optical performance and mechanical reliability which provide the photographer with the ultimate in quality images, even under extreme conditions. Ingenious optical design, in conjunction with production methods developed by and exclusive to Leica, set today's highest standards in photography. Plus, the most stringent quality control within the industry guarantees the consistent high level of quality which Leica is so famous for worldwide. The strictest controls, a matter of course at Leica, include environmental protection and waste management. In the production of all products only environmentally compatible means and raw materials are used. Our award-winning and trendsetting packaging is almost without exception of cardboard. Developed by Leica to be suitable for the products, provide maximum protection and be multifunctional. All printed matter is on paper bleached without chlorine.

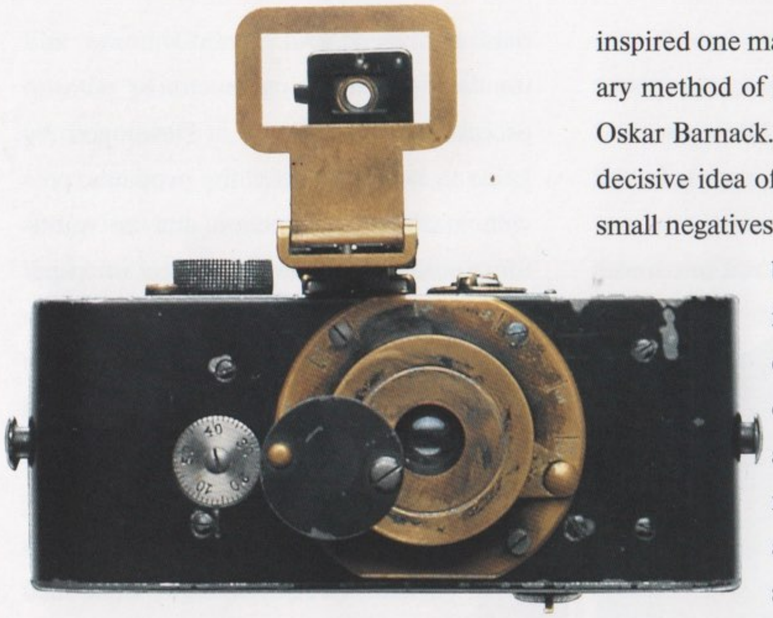


State-of-the-art computer-aided production lines ensure highest precision.

Qualified specialists monitor the tightest tolerances.

Our 1400 employees worldwide are of the highest caliber. In addition, this high-tech company has networks in place for close customer contact to attend individually to the needs of every Leica friend. Every year more than 5000 Leica customers come to Solms, to the Service or Leica Akademie, and take advantage of personal contact with our team of experts in photography and Leica.

A VISION COMES TRUE.



The greatest discoveries are often based on purely pragmatic ideas. During photography's first 75 years, photographers were mainly occupied in dragging their heavy plate cameras and tripods from place to place to finally take a picture after lengthy and difficult preparation. This toilsome work inspired one man to search for a revolutionary method of photography. His name was Oskar Barnack. As early as 1905 he had the decisive idea of making large pictures from small negatives. But almost a decade passed before he was successful in technically realizing his dream, when acting as head of development at Leitz. As a passionate amateur cinematographer, he constructed a small instrument for exposure tests while working on designs for movie cameras. It was then that he conceived his ingenious idea to use the film lengthwise for still pictures and to double the image area of the motion picture format. With this, the first camera with the classic 35 mm format was born: the Ur-LEICA. Even though in 1914 Oskar

André Kertész:
Selling lilies of the valley, Paris, 1928.

Ilse Bing:
Self-portrait in mirrors, 1931.

Lothar Rübelt:
The high diver, 1929.

Oskar Barnack (1879 – 1936).

Barnack was already taking excellent quality photographs with the LEICA, series production could not begin until 1924 – delayed due to World War I. One year later it was presented to the public. This new image format meant a new form of vision, revolutionizing photojournalism right up to today. Cameras like the LEICA M enable dynamic candid shots to be taken quietly and discreetly, amid all the action. These decades of experience of the inventor of 35 mm photography form the basis for pioneering innovations both present and future. The photographic medium of the 20th century is moving forward into the next millennium.

The Wetzlar floods, circa 1920, taken by Oskar Barnack with the Ur-LEICA.

A CHAIN OF HIGH PERFORMANCE FROM PHOTOGRAPHY THROUGH REPRODUCTION.

The Leica logo stands for a range of products which have one thing in common: excellent quality. Masterly achievements in optics, mechanical precision and intelligent electronics produce the ultimate in imaging quality. Today the LEICA system is comprised of three different lines of cameras, covering every photographic demand. The classic LEICA M6 is unique as it's the legitimate successor to the Ur-LEICA. The only 35 mm rangefinder system camera in the world, its silky-smooth, whisper-quiet shutter release and high-performance interchangeable lenses from 21 to 135 mm continue to make the M6 the dream camera of many a photographer. The LEICA SLR cameras form a comprehensive system with absolutely top class camera technology: the mechanical LEICA R6.2 is the perfect means for freely developing your own creativity, whereas the multimodes of the LEICA R7 offer optimal features for versatile photography of the highest level – in any conceivable situation. The system is complemented with an extensive range of high-performance lenses with focal lengths ranging from 15 to 800 mm.

Photo: Leonard Freed

On the spot, where the action is...

...the whisper-quiet M6 enables spontaneous and inconspicuous work with top results.

LEICA M6 – still the only 35 mm rangefinder system camera in the world.

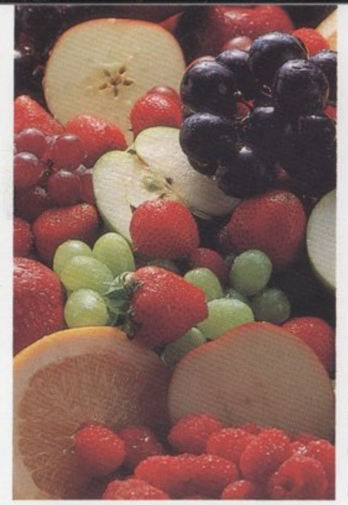


Photo: Fred Maroon

The R-system opens all facets of photography for the photo enthusiast.

Optimum slide reproduction: LEICA projectors.

The LEICA mini II for brilliant snapshots with high optical performance.

LEICA R6.2 – mechanical precision for creative photography.

The LEICA R7 – the multi-automatic camera for versatile photography of the highest level.

The compact camera with precision optics: LEICA mini zoom with LEICA VARIO-ELMAR.

The fully automatic LEICA mini II and LEICA mini zoom compact cameras are popular with hobby photographers, as well as advanced amateurs and pros who enjoy using them as a second camera. An ideal constant companion, they fit in any pocket and are ready to shoot at any opportune moment. With fast and accurate autofocus, exposure and focus memory, continuous mode and multiflash function – these amazing little cameras in Leica quality are always ready to go. And, of course, the photographic quality standards also apply to Leica projection. Dynamic photographs are reproduced sharply in every detail. PRADOVIT projectors and their brilliant lenses, as well as the FOCOMAT V35 enlarger, close the chain of high performance from photography to reproduction.

OPTICS THAT CAPTIVATE. FOR CLOSE-UP AND DISTANT VIEWING:

LEICA 7 x 42 BA:
Versatile top quality binoculars for all-purpose use during daylight and twilight.

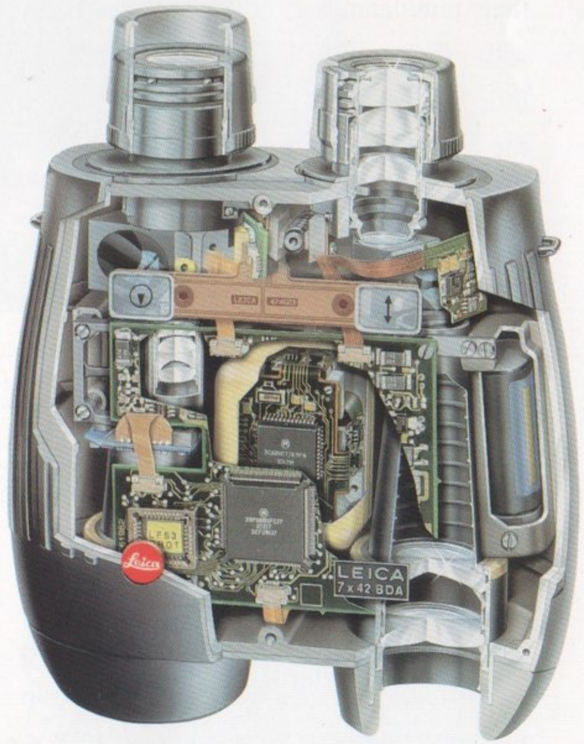
Since the early days of mankind, people have searched for ways to improve the performance of our eyes via optical aids – perhaps to bring the elusive, majestic eagle close in view. With Leica binoculars the most critical observer can now hold a high-tech product in hand which offers a unique seeing experience. For all types of observation, TRINOVID binoculars have won many distinguishing awards in design and performance: lightweight, compact and bright for precise close-up and distant viewing when, e. g., hiking, mountain climbing or travelling.

. . . or when hiking. With LEICA binoculars you don't miss even the smallest details.

Floating up high yet keeping track of what's down below. LEICA binoculars – always in their element.

Small and easy to fold away: LEICA compact binoculars are hard to beat.

High magnifying power with high twilight performance for observing distant or small close-up objects, e. g., at sporting events and for bird watching. Incredibly bright with an excellent field of view, they are perfect for the outdoorsman for use even under extreme conditions. If more than just a visual estimate is required, the high-performance GEOVID binoculars with integrated precision distance meter and electronic compass open a totally new dimension in observation: assessment in three dimensional orientation – a Leica innovation with farsighted development in the future of seeing.

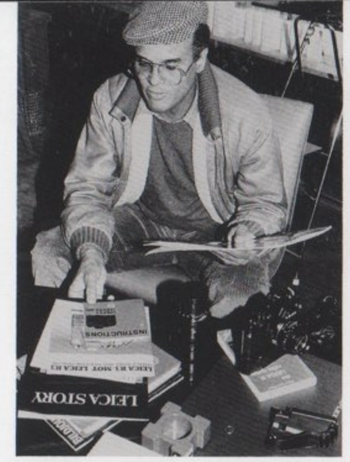


A new dimension in seeing: LEICA GEOVID with integrated precision distance meter and electronic compass.

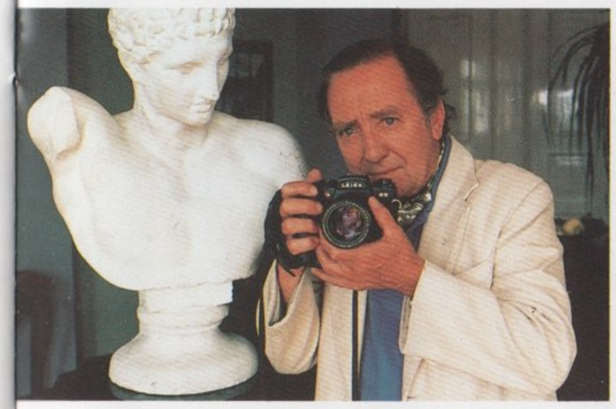
THE LITTLE TREASURE OF THE FAMOUS.

If you own a Leica, you are in the best of company. People throughout the world of high regard and influence enjoy taking their own Leica images. Be it for personal snapshots, reminiscences of travels, or documentary purposes which must meet scientific standards: prominent international personalities take their photographs with their own little treasure: the LEICA. If LEICA cameras could only talk ... for instance, the M3 owned by Queen Elizabeth II. A camera which is even immortalized with its proud owner on two British stamps. This "coalition" didn't let the Prime Minister rest, and now John Major has his own LEICA C2-ZOOM. But Leica is not just at home in political circles. On expeditions, it proves itself again and again under the harshest of conditions. LEICA cameras accompanied Arved Fuchs and Reinhold Messner on their 3500 km arduous trek to the South Pole, and are still functioning perfectly. Here, they had to withstand temperatures which turns boiling water to ice in a split second: minus 40 °C! Also years of tropical heat, moisture and sea salt couldn't wear out the two R4s and eight LEICA lenses on Rollo Gebhardt's sails around the world. If Mount Everest is to be climbed or the Sahara to be crossed, the LEICA is the perfect partner to rely on – no matter how tough it gets. Plus, it's beautiful to behold – as confirmed by such prominent designers as Sergio Pininfarina and Karl Lagerfeld. LEICA – the super model image any way you look at it.

Royalty and Leica:
Queen Elizabeth II is an enthusiastic Leica photographer.



LEICA is a big hit for Harry Belafonte!

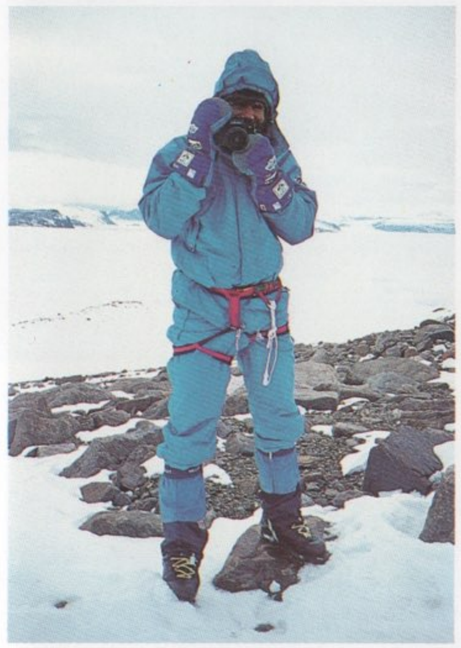


Prominent German TV star in action:
Hans Clarin with the LEICA.

© Karl Lagerfeld

Fashion designer Karl Lagerfeld gives preference to classic beauty for his photography as well.

Reliable in extreme conditions:
The LEICA R6.2 in the hands of Reinhold Messner



Two famous stars:
Jerry Lewis is nuts about LEICA!

A TOOL IN THE HANDS OF THE BEST.

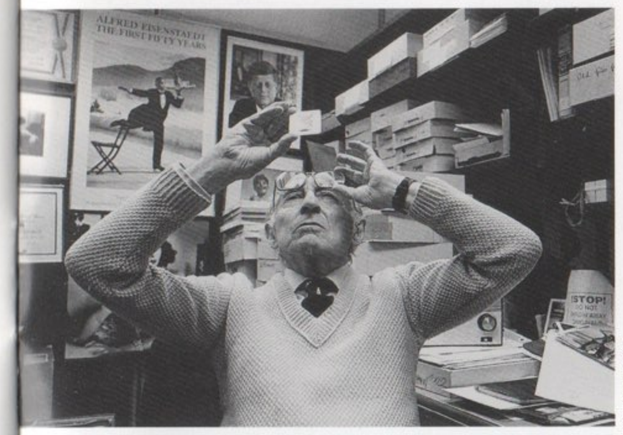
Dr. Paul Wolff: Workers at a blast furnace, circa 1940.

Dr. Paul Wolff (1887-1951).

For the world's great photographers, LEICA was and is an irreplaceable tool. The means for expressing their creative ideas and for sharp observation. Photojournalism would not have come into being in its present day form without the compact, handy 35 mm LEICA. Already Dr. Paul Wolff proved that small negatives can truly make great photographs. Hereafter Leica has won recognition worldwide in the hands of great protagonists: Leica photographer Alfred Eisenstaedt is the symbolic figure of early photojournalism. André Kertész brought poetic dreams to life with LEICA. And today? When Sebastiao Salgado captures the burning oil fields of Kuwait on film, or Eric Valli documents Nepalese wild honey collectors at their work, LEICA cameras are in action. Although perhaps no one has expressed it more aptly than Henri Cartier-Bresson: "... it can be like a long passionate kiss, or then again like a shot from a gun or the couch of a psychoanalyst. You can do anything with a LEICA."

Henri Cartier-Bresson: Sunday on the banks of the Marne, 1938

Eric Valli: Wild honey collectors.



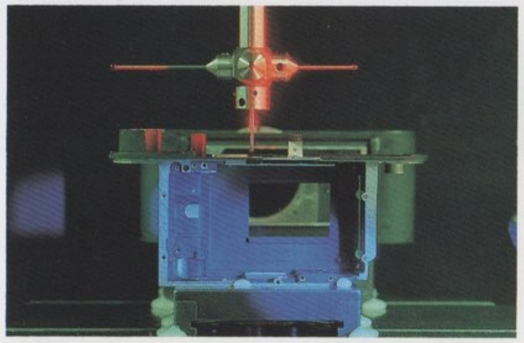
© Pfannmüller

Alfred Eisenstaedt

V-day, 1945.

ONE MASTERPIECE AFTER THE OTHER.

The heart of production is in Solms, near Wetzlar – the birthplace of LEICA. In particular, lens production and camera and binocular assembly are located here. As a global company, Leica is traditional in



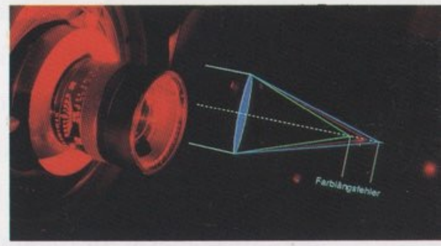
Modern technology: Precision measuring with 3-D metering unit.

the European concept of production on an international basis. However, regardless where a LEICA or its components are made, our strict high quality standards and guidelines equally apply to all production plants. Such as in Vila Nova de Famalico, Portugal. Here, under German management, compact binoculars as well as optical and mechanical assemblies are manufactured. The Leica Camera Group presently has 1400 employees worldwide, 750 of which are in Germany. Leica's policy of continual future-orientated investment in equipment ensures that only state-of-the-art technologies are employed. This unparalleled combination of highly qualified specialists, Leica-developed precision machinery as well as the most up-to-date computer-aided systems guarantee future products which continue to set the standard of optical quality and are unique in their field: Masterpieces, made by Leica.

Leica precision in Portugal: Vila Nova de Famalicão.

GUARANTEE AND WORLDWIDE SERVICE.

Top test results in independent photo publications around the world testify to Leica perfect quality control: Uncompromising checks and tests are done at all stages of production to ensure that every LEICA product can always be relied on to optimally perform even under extreme conditions. This is backed by an official warranty certificate with an extended worldwide guarantee of two years for cameras and 30 years for binoculars. The LEICA performs flawlessly after decades of use where other brands don't dare promise performance at all. Even after many years, should service be required: for example a LEICA M3 made in 1954, even after taking tens of thousands of shutter releases, it's perfectly repaired with original Leica components, all functions put through intensive tests and any necessary adjustments made.



Electronic testing of optical data.

Your reliable LEICA is again good as new! More than 100 Leica Camera agencies and an extensive network of authorized Leica specialty dealers throughout the world honor the original Leica guarantee and provide expert service. Regardless if you are in the USA, Great Britain, or France: Leica service, with its fast, reliable diagnosis and thorough maintenance and repair, makes certain that your LEICA is back in full working order as quickly as possible. What's more, Leica customers receive a full one year warranty after each repair – covering all functions. A matter of course for the Number One in quality.

TOP PRECISION PERFORMANCE IS OUR CONSTANT GOAL

- We will do everything possible to maintain and to increase the value of the Leica trademark.
- We supply only products which fulfill customer desires with perfection.
- We cultivate further development of photography, observation and reproduction.
- We continue to be the leader in optical and mechanical development, and make wise use of electronics for our products.
- We ensure that every contact of our customers with Leica is a positive experience.
- Our customers are our partners.
- Our considerations and actions taken are customer and future orientated.
- We strive for continual improvement in the results of our work, in work methods and in personal communication.
- We deal fairly and in partnership with one another.
- We are global.
- We think and act from the outset in an environmentally orientated way.

Trademark of
The Leica Camera Group

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